

New-build vs pre-owned houses in the Cape's southern suburbs

According to Sally Gracie, Chas Everitt International's area specialist in Constantia Upper, until recently there were two strongly opposing camps of buyers in Cape Town's leafy southern suburbs, but now they are moving closer together.



“Previously, there were those who would only consider older properties with their ‘character’ and original features, and those who were only interested in the easy-living and low maintenance offered by newly built homes,” she says.

“However, in the past few years we have seen a definite thawing of attitudes as developers and builders broaden their offerings – and appeal – while even the most ardent period property owners balk at the ever-rising electricity, utility and maintenance costs of their high-ceilinged homes.”

Increasing demand for newly-built luxury properties

Boasting some of the most luxurious houses in the Cape Peninsula, the suburbs of Rondebosch, Claremont, Wynberg, Constantia, Bishopscourt and Tokai remain a firm favourite with families who want to be close to the area’s quality schools and the University of Cape Town, she says.

“But while suburbs like Bishopscourt and Upper Constantia were traditionally coveted for their rambling estates with historic

manor houses, we've noticed an increasing demand for newly-built luxury properties on smaller stands.

"The demand for lower maintenance homes and a secure lifestyle is being driven largely by buyers from other provinces, particularly Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal, who are prepared to compromise on size in exchange for the considerable benefits of living in Cape Town. As a result, developers are cashing in and we're seeing more and more top-end developments going up."

Major ongoing savings

Gracie says that while newly-constructed houses in these areas tend to cost more than similar pre-owned homes – sometimes as much as 30% more – buyers are also increasingly aware of the major ongoing savings to be made, especially during the first few years of ownership, in terms of maintenance, utilities and property rates.

Gracie points out that a built-from-scratch house also generally means the absence of transfer duty and no property sale "chain", so once the bond is approved, owners can move right in. "It should also come with structural warranties so that, if you find anything wrong within a specified time period, the developer is obliged to put it right."

That said, all those fabulous amenities you saw in the spec home can really add up. "While newly-constructed houses are built to current building code standards, you will have to pay extra for anything over and above the basics. And upgraded features – which are often marked up heavily for the developer's profit – can end up costing you far more than you ever intended."

Matter of personal preference

Ultimately, though, the choice between new-build and pre-owned is a matter of personal preference, she says. "Some people like things with a history, others hate hand-me-downs – it's as simple as that."

But, as they weigh up whether to buy a shiny new construction or a charming period home, buyers in the southern suburbs can at least be assured of the value of their investment, Gracie notes. "The market in these coveted areas remains virtually 'recession proof' due to continued high demand for homes of all kinds."

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>